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The Farmer's Advocate and Home Magazine

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1866

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LONDON, ONTARIO, AUGUST 3, 1916.

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EDITORIAL.

Keep the water trough filled.

Swat the stable fly as well as the house fly.

Never put off for to-morrow what can conveniently be done to-day.

Weeds do not thrive during hot, dry weather when the cultivator is kept going.

In the absence of an irrigation plant, remarkable results can be secured by the use of the hoe and cultivator.

Commence preparation for 1917 crop by after-harvest cultivation to destroy weeds and conserve moisture.

A few hours spent this summer in preventing weeds producing seed may save days of cultivation next year.

Now is the time when judicious, supplementary feeding will maintain the milk flow and general vigor of the dairy herd.

With the assistance of the hot July weather the corn crop in endeavoring to make up for the delay in seeding operations.

Cut the burdocks growing around the fences and save the trouble of picking burrs from the horses' tails and manes this fall.

Selecting the best heads of grain and saving them for a seed plot, pays well. Have you tried improving your crops this way?

Nothing is gained in this world that is really worth while without a lot of hard work. The laggard seldom gets anywhere.

Do not attempt deep cultivation of the corn crop after cultivating shallow once or twice. Root pruning will give the crop a set-back.

If the pasture field affords no shade for the herd it may pay to keep the cows in a well-ventilated stable during the heat of the day.

The July sun has done its share in aiding to destroy the weeds in the summer-fallow. Has the cultivator been kept going as regularly as it should have been?

Keep the harvesting machinery and wagons well oiled and greased. Besides prolonging their period of usefulness they will draw much easier than if oiling is neglected.

A few bolts and nuts of different sizes together with a good wrench should always be carried in the tool box of every implement. They may save loss of time on a rush day.

Crops in competition are severely scored if the judge finds noxious weeds growing and producing seeds. Many good fields of grain have lost the prize because of neglect on the part of the owner to cut the weeds. While it is difficult to keep certain weeds under control there should be, at least, an effort made to do so. Weeds have no rightful place in any crop.

The Open Mind in Politics.

Politics is important because it deals with the public business of the country. It should not be prostituted to prejudice, partizanship or grafting—another name for pilfering at the public expense. Dr. L. H. Bailey, who ranks easily among the most eminent American men of the day in fruitful agricultural research, particularly in the great field of horticulture, takes the hopeful view that the growing independence of the voter is the most significant movement in politics. He finds him breaking away from parties, weary of machine control and "boss rule" with their natural adjunct of corruption. These are the reasons specified, but Dr. Bailey thinks that the causes lie deeper and are to be found in the spread of the science-spirit and the growth of intelligence. Agricultural colleges and experiment stations in all directions are permeated with the spirit to which Dr. Bailey refers. The periodicals and text books of the day are charged with this open spirit of enquiry, and by degrees, slowly enough it is true, people come to see that it ought to apply to the business affairs and policies of the country. Blindly following a party does not settle anything aright. The making of government is a serious business and should be taken seriously by the voters at large. Dr. Bailey therefore pleads, and he is surely right, for the application of the open mind, even though we may not propose to eliminate sentiment, and the following of great leaders. Parties are inevitable, but leaders and parties and policies will all be better if we approach them with the fair and open mind. No one is in a better position to do this than the voter of the farm, from the ranks of which more men should be drawn because of capacity, integrity and independence—qualifications never so urgently needed in public life as at this very time and during the great reconstruction period to follow the war. Daylight and independent spirit should displace hole-in-corner partizanship if we are to have a wholesome rule of the people. We apply the open mind to questions of farm practice. Let it be done in the affairs of the country and we shall have fewer sordid scandals to be ashamed of in the future.

Selling Wool for Its Real Value.

Some day the sheep raisers of Ontario will awaken to the fact that they are selling their wool each season at a price below its actual value. Perhaps, as it is offered for sale, the Ontario clip is sold very well, for, generally speaking, no effort is made to grade it or add to it those finishing touches which enhance the price. Furthermore, the transaction with the farmer in each case is a small one, but almost as much time is required to close the deal as though a carload were being purchased. One bushel of apples or potatoes on the farm is worth very little, because the marketing of it alone would so eat into the price that the net gain to the grower might be very small. However, the food nutrients contained in the bushel of apples or potatoes are more valuable before they leave the farm than after passing through the various channels of trade. The products of the farm are appraised according to what the ultimate consumer will pay, minus the cost of getting it to his door. Similarly with wool, Ontario shepherds were selling from 31 to 35 cents per pound, while the shepherds of Quebec were receiving 43 cents per pound for their best grades, or an average of 41.8 cents for good, bad and indifferent. This represents a difference of from 20 to 40 per cent. in price, made possible by a well-organized, co-operative effort and a system of grading and marketing.

The farmer with a carload of potatoes receives a higher net price per every 60 pounds than for his one lone bushel, and a group of shepherds who combine their wool, have it graded and prepared in a modern way to suit the trade, realize a greater revenue than the isolated raiser of sheep with a few bags of wool. There would be no great difference in the value of a fleece whether shorn from the back of a sheep in Ontario or Quebec, but the way it is subsequently handled may result in the difference of from 20 to 40 per cent. This is the point we endeavored to make clear in an article entitled, "Ways and Means of Marketing Wool That Might be Applied in Ontario," and which appeared in the issue of April 6, 1916. Alberta, Manitoba, Quebec and Manitoulin Islands, Ont., have put this modern co-operative method into practice with pleasing results, but the majority of the Ontario shepherds still continue to market their clip in the antiquated, money-losing way. A report of the operations in Quebec in this regard during 1916 appears in this issue. Ontario sheep raisers and wool producers can well afford to study these methods and consider the scheme. We have in this province the proper machinery for organizing and conducting an educational propaganda. If thousands of dollars can be saved to the farmers by putting it into operation it is indeed time that the wheels began to move. Perhaps a little discussion at the Sheep Breeders' annual meeting would give the engine a "once-over" and start things going.

Breeding for a Purpose.

The most successful stockmen to-day have been laboring for years with a definite aim in view. They have bred along a line that they believed would eventually produce the animal of the desired type and conformation. The weakling or the off-type animal has been weeded from the herd, and only the best retained to perpetuate their kind. The result is a whole herd of valuable animals with true breed type and excellent conformation. Dairymen have also selected and bred to intensify milk and butter-fat production in their herds. Breeders who were fortunate enough to secure good foundation stock have had an easier road to travel than the average breeder. However, any stockman who knows the type and quality of herd he eventually wishes to own and sets out with those qualifications firmly fixed in his mind can and will succeed. There has been too much haphazard breeding, even among pure-bred stockmen. Using a sire of one strain this season and of another the next makes it difficult to establish a definite type. If every owner of grade and pure-bred stock would select and breed to intensify the good qualities of his herd or flock, the value of live stock in this country would be greatly increased during the next few years. Young men in particular when starting into live-stock breeding should set a standard and then strive to breed their herds up to it. Possibly breeding for a purpose is most clearly exemplified in the case of dairymen. The production of grades as well as pure-bred herds has been more than doubled, in some instances, by using a selected sire and then weeding out the unprofitable individuals.

This is not an expensive system to follow. It merely means securing the best possible sire to head the herd, and then select the females to keep by use of the scales and tester. It may take generations to set a particular type and conformation of form, but, producing qualities of the average dairy herd could be doubled in a decade if the proper system of selection and breeding were followed. Knowing exactly what the cows are producing in a year or two years is a straight business proposition. Short tests have proven what individuals of the various breeds